

FSC-182-A		10/30/96	
SUBJECT: AIM Data - MSA Transition			
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(Please distribute to all RJR personnel receiving AIM data.)

NOTE: We realize this communication is lengthy and detailed; however, to ensure adequate understanding of our transition, please thoroughly read and understand the following:

The Transition to MSA processed data occurred on October 14, 1996. As with any start-up of this size, there are going to be initial issues that will have to be worked through. Since MSA processes data very differently from the way it was previously processed, this letter is intended to clarify questions you may have and explain differences you may see in the data.

MATCHING

Historical Data - All accounts matched prior to August 5, 1996, should remain intact. MSA has assigned a unique MSA code (which includes the wholesaler's Retail number) to these accounts to attempt to match data received from wholesalers July 1, 1996, forward to the same account. Since the database is a rolling 66 week database, accounts that have no volume for the 66 week time period were dropped. This would also have occurred with the RJR process.

While the historical data will not take advantage of the benefits the MSA process can offer, this was the only way to ensure that accounts previously matched did not become unassigned or reassigned to a different SIS account number. MSA will be providing to RJR a list of accounts which they consider to be questionable matches. This list will be worked through as time permits and any mis-assigned historical data will be re-assigned to the correct account(s).

- **Current Data (July 1, 1996, forward)** - Initially, when new data is received, MSA assigns a unique MSA code to the account. Once this account is assigned to a valid SIS account number, a link is established between the SIS account number and the unique MSA number. Since this unique number includes the Wholesaler's Retail number, this link will remain in place until the wholesaler changes his retail number, even if the address changes on the account.
- The MSA matching process is performed in 3 steps: Batch matching, Interactive matching, and verification. The process weights the account name, address, city, state, and zip for each retail record submitted by the wholesaler. The Retail record is then compared to the Master List for probable matches. The match does not have to be exact, but it does have to be within a 90% probability range (based upon the weighted fields) for the match to occur in the Batch Matching process. If multiple records fall within this range, the account is assigned to the SIS account number with the highest probability. Since the account name carries a weight in this process, this should help to eliminate the mis-matching of stores where multiple stores have the same street address, as in strip malls.
- All Retail records with less than a 90% probability match to SIS fall to the Interactive matching step. This is a manual matching process where each account is compared to a list of probable matches on the SIS Master List. Since this step does involve a judgment call, RJR has defined criteria for matching in this step that includes scrutinizing of the name, street address, SIS class of trade, store number, etc.. MSA has been instructed to match on store number when possible even if the address does not match the SIS address. While RJR would like as many accounts matched as possible, we have stressed that we expect quality matches in this process, not quantity matches. Therefore, if MSA is not confident the match is valid, the account will remain unmatched.

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- The last step in the matching process is verification. MSA verifies each account, matched and unmatched, to ensure that all possible matches have been made and all matches are correct.
- While MSA has made every effort to match and merge Historical and current data, it is entirely possible that data may be assigned historically and unassigned for July forward. This may be especially true for chains. Previously, RJR had many different processes for matching; sometimes "customizing" the process dependent on the chain or Direct account. A major part of the RJR matching process included RJR assigning a unique code to each retail account. For Direct accounts which did not require some customization to the process, these unique codes included the wholesaler's Retail number just as MSA's process. However, if the Direct required a "customized" process, this unique number was created differently and did not always include the wholesaler's Retail number. MSA had a problem in converting some of these RJR codes to their coding structure. Since MSA has one matching process for all accounts, which includes the wholesaler's Retail number, MSA may not be able initially to match all retails for Direct accounts and/or chains which had customized processing at RJR.

UNASSIGNED / SUSPENDED ACCOUNTS

- Unassigned accounts have increased with this transition, as we expected. This is due to many reasons which include:
 - Problems in converting RJR unique code for Direct accounts/ Chains using a "customized" matching process previously.
 - Accounts converting from RJR format to PM format.
 - New accounts participating in 2nd half PARTNERS.
- Suspended accounts have decreased, as MSA has been able to match many accounts that were previously suspended.
- It is imperative that each manager check his unassigned and suspended accounts on a regular basis and plan ahead for Business Reviews. With this transition, assignments are no longer updated instantaneously. Once an account is assigned through function 215, 216, 217, or 218, it could take up to 2 weeks before the assignment is reflected in the AIM data. This is due to the fact that the assignments are transmitted on a weekly basis to MSA; they must process the assignments and send the data back to RJR on the next weekly scheduled tape.

CARTON VOLUME

- MSA will report carton volume down to the UPC. However, there are some major differences that you should be aware of:
 - All cartons are now in 200 stick equivalents for July data forward. Historical data is not in stick equivalents. Therefore, you may see differences on the 5 pack carton volume trends versus the historical data.
 - Data which can not be identified by UPC will be reported as UNIDENTIFIED VOLUME. This volume must be less than .5% of the account's Total Volume to be included in the tape. If over .5%, the data for the account is not included on the tape. Unidentified Volume is defaulted to the Full Price tier. When the data is identified, it is assigned to the appropriate UPC, Brand Family, and Price Tier.
 - Promoted volume for July forward will be reported in 4 categories at the style level: BSGSF (F), Discounts (D), Premiums (P), and Unclassified (U). Historical promoted data will be identified in Total (T).

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- AIM will report Qualified data only. Accounts are now required to submit all data, including Trans-Shipments. However, these are identified at MSA and are not considered as Qualified data.
- Carton volumes / shares may change from week to week for same time period due to identification of Trans-Shipments, Re-classification of Unidentified Volume, Data Re-submissions, and Correction of Processing Errors.

STORE COUNTS/AVERAGE WEEKLY VOLUME PER STORE

- Store counts may change on Direct Account and Sales Level aggregates. This is the result of MSA identifying and combining multiple Unassigned / Suspended records for the same account from the same wholesaler. Previously, each record was counted as an individual store; they will now count as one store. MSA will not combine any accounts across suppliers.
- Average Weekly Volume Per Store will change as the Store Counts change. This is a calculation that uses Store Count as the divisor. Volume per store will increase as the store count decreases. Please be aware of this when comparing reports run previously to current reports.

We have validated this data to the best of our ability before releasing to you. However, the database contains over 65 million records and it would be impossible to look at each and every one. We ask that you look at this new data very carefully before it is used or presented to a customer. If, after reviewing this letter, you determine there is a problem with the data, please contact Dave Smlerclak at (910) 741-6059. Do not use or present the questionable data until the problem has been investigated and resolved.

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